

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 183, is considered and agreed to.

The Senator from Arkansas.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### JASTA

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today I wish to share some of my thoughts on an issue relating to the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act.

Few dispute the noble goal of ensuring that justice is done for the families of the victims of September 11. Time after time, this body has acted to honor the memories of the fallen from that terrible day, just as it should. But in acting to honor the victims of September 11 and the grieving families they left behind, we cannot lose sight of other crucial policy goals that enjoy broad bipartisan support, such as preserving important legal principles that protect the members of our Armed Forces and perpetuate strong relations with important allies.

As an article in the December 6 edition of the New York Times explains, there are ample concerns that individual citizens of a close U.S. ally have funded terrorist activities and may have assisted those who carried out the September 11 attacks.

Despite the claim that this ally has taken any official action to support the September 11 attackers remains far from proven and, in fact, has been of great and instrumental assistance that this ally has provided in prosecuting the war on terrorism, questions do remain.

In response, the families of numerous September 11 victims looked to resolve these questions through the courts. Specifically, they sought a change to the law that greatly expands the ability of a private individual to bring a suit in federal court against a sovereign nation. Heeding the calls for justice from victims' families, we recently enacted the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act law, and as a result, the scope of the legal principle known as sovereign immunity—here, the immunity of a foreign government from a civil suit in our Federal courts—has been distinctly reduced.

Again, there is nothing wrong with September 11 families seeking justice; in fact, I laud them for their commitment and perseverance, which is why I supported the passage of this legislation at the time and still strongly support its goals. Nevertheless, one of the consequences of the exact language of the new statute is that our important

ally now faces the prospect of going through the extensive and intrusive discovery process in federal court. As a result, one of our closest partners in the war on terrorism could be ordered by a Federal judge to turn over some of their most sensitive documents in order to show that their official governments actions did not directly support the September 11 attackers. Indeed, nothing in the recently declassified portions of the September 11 Commission Report suggests that our ally's government leadership had any role in the attack.

We must consider how the technical features of this change in the law will affect our national security. If we allow such lawsuits to proceed under the particulars of the newly enacted statutory language here in the United States, we undermine the central premise of our objection to other countries that might seek to modify their sovereign immunity laws by permitting lawsuits against the United States. We could easily find ourselves at the mercy of a foreign justice system—one far different than our own—if someone filed suit in a foreign nation against the United States and demanded that our government turn over highly classified documents. If our government refused, that foreign court could potentially exact serious consequences, such as freezing American assets overseas. Worse yet, if other nations change their sovereign immunity laws, foreign courts could potentially begin to hold U.S. service members personally liable, both civilly and criminally, for actions they have based upon the lawful orders of their superiors.

In sum, once we begin to unravel sovereign immunity at home, we risk creating a cascade of unintended consequences abroad.

These concerns are widely shared. In a recent op-ed in the Wall Street Journal, former Attorney General Michael Mukasey and Ambassador John Bolton made those very same arguments. They also point out that the new law “shifts authority for a huge component of national security from the politically accountable branches—the President and the Congress—to the Judiciary, the branch least competent to deal with international matters of life and death.

In fact, I was particularly struck by the fact that the editorial boards of the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, the Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times, and Bloomberg have all raised serious and substantial concerns regarding the particulars of the new legislation. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that some of these editorials be printed in the RECORD following my remarks.

Not only do these editorial boards believe this is not in the best interest of the United States, but so do our closest allies as well. Specifically, officials from the European Union, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands have all written public messages or passed reso-

lutions echoing these arguments. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a letter from the government of the Netherlands be printed in the RECORD following my remarks.

Nevertheless, I do believe a solution can be found that provides justice for the September 11 families while enhancing our national security. My optimism stems in no small part from the leaders involved. I understand Senators MCCAIN and GRAHAM are working on just such a compromise, and I fully support their efforts to achieve a just resolution of this issue. Furthermore, we all owe Senator CORNYN a debt of gratitude for his leadership in ensuring that justice is done. I am also greatly encouraged that Senator SCHUMER is leading the Democratic efforts on this matter.

The role of the Senate is to resolve the great issues facing our Nation by forging lasting consensus. We have numerous such challenges in the past, and I fervently believe that building such a solution is possible. I urge all my colleagues to help us move toward this goal.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, Sept. 28, 2016]

THE RISKS OF SUING THE SAUDIS FOR 9/11

(By the Editorial Board)

The Senate and the House are expected to vote this week on whether to override President Obama's veto of a bill that would allow families of the victims of the Sept. 11 attacks to sue Saudi Arabia for any role it had in the terrorist operations. The lawmakers should let the veto stand.

The legislation, called the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act, would expand an exception to sovereign immunity, the legal principle that protects foreign countries and their diplomats from lawsuits in the American legal system. While the aim—to give the families their day in court—is compassionate, the bill complicates the United States' relationship with Saudi Arabia and could expose the American government, citizens and corporations to lawsuits abroad. Moreover, legal experts like Stephen Vladeck of the University of Texas School of Law and Jack Goldsmith of Harvard Law School doubt that the legislation would actually achieve its goal.

Co-sponsored by Senator Chuck Schumer, Democrat of New York, and Senator John Cornyn, Republican of Texas, the measure is intended to overcome a series of court rulings that have blocked all lawsuits filed by the 9/11 families against the Saudi government. The Senate passed the bill unanimously in May, and the House gave its approval this month.

The legislation would, among other things, amend a 1976 law that grants other countries broad immunity from American lawsuits—unless the country is on the State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism (Iran, Sudan and Syria) or is alleged to have committed a terrorist attack that killed Americans on United States soil. The new bill would clarify that foreign governments can be held liable for aiding terrorist groups, even if that conduct occurred overseas.

Advocates say the measure is narrowly drawn, but administration officials argue that it would apply much more broadly and result in retaliatory actions by other nations. The European Union has warned that

if the bill becomes law, other countries could adopt similar legislation defining their own exemptions to sovereign immunity. Because no country is more engaged in the world than the United States—with military bases, drone operations, intelligence missions and training programs—the Obama administration fears that Americans could be subject to legal actions abroad.

The legislation is motivated by a belief among the 9/11 families that Saudi Arabia played a role in the attacks, because 15 of the 19 hijackers, who were members of Al Qaeda, were Saudis. But the independent American commission that investigated the attacks found no evidence that the Saudi government or senior Saudi officials financed the terrorists.

Proponents of the legislation cite two assassination cases in which legal claims were allowed against Chile and Taiwan. Administration officials, however, say that those cases alleged the direct involvement of foreign government agents operating in the United States.

The current debate is complicated by the fact that Saudi Arabia is a difficult ally, at odds with the United States over the Iran nuclear deal, a Saudi-led war in Yemen and the war in Syria. It is home of the fundamentalist strand of Islam known as Wahhabism, which has inspired many of the extremists the United States is trying to defeat. But it is also a partner in combating terrorism. The legislation could damage this fraught relationship. Riyadh has already threatened to withdraw billions of dollars in American-based assets to protect them from court action.

The desire to assist the Sept. 11 families is understandable, and the bill is expected to become law. The question is, at what cost?

[From the Wall Street Journal, Sept. 28, 2016]

#### CONGRESS OVERRIDES OBAMA—TOO BAD IT'S ON A BILL THAT WILL HURT U.S. INTERESTS

Wouldn't you know that Congress finally challenges President Obama on foreign policy, and it's in a bad cause that will harm U.S. interests. Too bad the President did so little to stop it.

On Wednesday the Senate (97-1) and House (348-77) overrode Mr. Obama's veto of the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act (Jasta) that will let victims of terrorism sue foreign governments linked to such attacks. Mr. Obama's veto message rightly noted that this break from the diplomatic principle of sovereign immunity will take "consequential decisions" about terrorism from Presidents and hand them to courts and private litigants.

The law is supposed to help the families of those killed on 9/11 to pursue Saudi Arabia, the ultimate deep-pocket target. Never mind that there is no hard proof the Saudi government was complicit in those attacks. Or that Americans can already sue nations that are officially designated as state sponsors of terror.

This bill has no such limit, so all it takes is a trial lawyer to persuade a judge that a foreign government is liable and we're off to the races. Lawyers will have endless fun subpoenaing documents and testimony from the U.S. and foreign governments that will complicate American diplomacy and security.

Supporters of the bill rejected any compromise, including language that would limit lawsuits to 9/11 victims, which shows that the real game is to enrich the trial bar. The Saudis may now move to liquidate at least some of their U.S. holdings so they don't become hostage to lawsuits, and some countries might retaliate against U.S. officials.

The blame is bipartisan. Democrats want another income stream for their trial-lawyer campaign funders, while Republicans stam-peded because no one wants to be seen as defending Saudi Arabia in an election year. We hope Republicans appreciate their hapless cynicism. They get the votes to override Mr. Obama for the first time, and it's on a bill that could help make New York Democrat Chuck Schumer Senate Majority Leader.

These are the same dime-store Metternichs who denounce Donald Trump for being reckless, though Mr. Trump also endorsed the veto override. So did Hillary Clinton, who as a former Secretary of State knows better.

The current Commander in Chief didn't do much to help. While he vetoed the measure in the end, he did almost nothing along the way to rally opposition. Harry Reid was the only Senate Democrat to support the veto, and he's not running for re-election. Mr. Obama expected the same Republicans he routinely portrays as evil to rescue him even as Mr. Schumer was waiting to ambush any Republicans who supported the Democratic President.

White House spokesman Josh Earnest called the Senate vote "the single most embarrassing thing" it has done in decades and said it was "an abdication of their basic responsibilities." But not nearly as embarrassing as the junior-varsity effort by his boss, who made it easy for Congress to trample him.

[From the Washington Post, Sept. 15, 2016]

#### SHOULD WE LET 9/11 VICTIMS SUE SAUDI ARABIA? NOT SO FAST.

(By Editorial Board)

A BASIC precept of international law is that sovereign nations, or their government officials, should not be liable for official actions in the civil courts of other sovereign nations. Sovereign immunity has stood the test of time because it makes practical sense. And it makes practical sense because the international deeds and misdeeds of governments are more equitably dealt with through state-to-state negotiations than by hauling one country's officials in front of the judges and juries of another.

Alas, the Senate and the House have unanimously voted to weaken this principle in the noble-sounding cause of justice for American victims of alleged state-sponsored acts of terrorism. The legislation, sparked by much-ballyhooed but so-far-unsubstantiated claims of official Saudi collusion in the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, would permit victims of acts of terrorism in the United States to sue alleged state sponsors for monetary damages in federal court. Under current law, such suits are permissible only against governments that the State Department has already designated as sponsors of terrorism: Iran, Syria and Sudan. The bill would enable private individuals and their lawyers to add oil-rich Saudi Arabia, perhaps the ultimate deep-pocketed defendant, to that list. Someday, other countries could find themselves in the dock, too.

Proponents describe the bill as a "narrow" adjustment to existing law, and, to be sure, they have watered down more sweeping earlier versions in the face of veto threats from President Obama and criticism from international-law and national-security experts. The revised bill allows the executive branch to freeze any given suit for 180 days, by certifying to a court that it is engaged in good-faith negotiations to resolve the plaintiff's claims with the defendant nation. Such a stay could be extended for as long as the State Department certifies that the negotiations are still ongoing. As long as an administration is willing to jump through these hoops, it could probably block an objection-

able lawsuit indefinitely, which makes one wonder what the point of the bill is anymore.

Note, however, that this would require the executive branch to conduct negotiations so it could make the certification, even if it didn't think such talks were warranted. And the bill leaves it up to a court whether to grant the initial stay. This is still too much power to give unelected, inexperienced judges over a core function of the political branches.

In short, to the extent the revised bill isn't merely symbolic, it's mischievous. Mr. Obama has repeatedly called it a precedent other countries could easily turn against the United States. It is not a far-fetched concern, given this country's global use of intelligence agents, Special Operations forces and drones, all of which could be construed as state-sponsored "terrorism" when convenient. Even if a future administration did succeed in blocking a lawsuit, the mere filing of it could irritate the target country or countries. Members of Congress have repeatedly claimed enough votes to override Mr. Obama's veto threat, and they may be right. Mr. Obama should carry it out anyway. If long-standing principles of law and policy are to be discarded so lightly, at least let it be done without his approval.

[From the Los Angeles Times]

#### ALLOWING AMERICANS TO SUE FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS OVER TERRORIST ACTS MAY SOUND LIKE A GOOD IDEA. IT'S NOT

(By LA Times Editorial Board)

From an emotional standpoint, the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act has some appeal. The bill, which is still being finalized, aims to open U.S. courts to civil lawsuits by Americans against foreign governments tied to terror attacks in the United States. Though it would be written broadly enough to encompass all the countries in the world, the bill has a clear target: Saudi Arabia. Proponents say they want to allow families of the nearly 3,000 victims of the 9/11 attacks seek damages in court if proof emerges that the Saudi government supported the 19 al Qaeda hijackers, 15 of whom were Saudis. It may sound good, but it's a bad idea.

Saudi Arabia isn't the most embraceable of U.S. allies. It executes people with abandon, including 47 in one day in January on charges ranging from involvement in terror attacks to disloyalty. The royal family's repression of women—from its draconian dress codes to its requirement that women be accompanied by male chaperones when leaving the house—offends basic concepts of human rights and equality, as does its practice of imprisoning dissidents. The government embraces public flogging as punishment for some crimes, a judgment facing Palestinian poet Ashraf Fayadh, who has been sentenced to eight years in prison and 800 lashes. His offense? Apostasy, based on poems that the government said embraced atheism and spread "some destructive thoughts into society."

What's more, the Saudis have close ties to deeply unsavory organizations. The bill currently making its way through Congress was prompted, in part, by investigations showing that leading Saudis helped bankroll Al Qaeda, though the reports that have been released so far have stopped short of linking Osama bin Laden's terror group to the Saudi royal family or government. Speculation continues to swirl around 28 pages of an 838-page congressional report on the 9/11 attacks that were withheld as classified when the rest of the report was released in 2002. The Saudi government has denied any complicity in the attacks. The pages were ordered classified by President George W. Bush, who said he feared their release would divulge sensitive investigative techniques.

The Obama administration has been reviewing the 28 pages and reportedly will soon declassify some of them. It ought to release all of them.

But regardless of the Saudi role in 9/11, it would be a big mistake to pass the bill, which would badly undercut the legal principle of “sovereign immunity.” Rooted in international law, sovereign immunity protects governments from being held to account in the courts of another country (with some narrow exceptions). Obviously, the downside of this is that it sometimes protects bad governments from being punished for their policies and actions. But on the other hand, it also serves as needed protection against trumped up or politicized prosecutions in courts around the world. And be warned: If Congress strips governments everywhere of their protection in U.S. courts, those countries will almost certainly adopt similar policies against the U.S.

That would lead to a mish-mash of legal challenges, claims of damages, and complicated international relations. Given the U.S. government’s disproportionate role in foreign affairs, the potential exposure such a measure would bring to the U.S. is inestimable. Expect to see civil claims by victims of collateral damage in military attacks, lawsuits by people caught up in the nation’s post-9/11 detention policies, including Guantanamo Bay, and challenges over atrocities committed by U.S.-backed Syrian rebels. Pretty much anywhere that U.S. policies have led to damages, those who suffered could potentially seek redress in their own courts, jeopardizing American assets overseas, where the rule of law sometimes is solid, but in other cases is a tool wielded for political purposes.

Fearing its exposure in American courts, Saudi Arabia has already threatened to sell \$750 billion in U.S. assets that it says would be at-risk if the proposed law goes into effect.

The 9/11 attacks were horrific, and the losses suffered by the victims’ families are incalculable. But the solution is not to open this Pandora’s Box. If the Saudi government is found to have supported the attacks, a resolution should be reached through diplomacy, nation to nation, not through individual claims in civil courts.

[From Bloomberg, May 24, 2016]

SUING THE SAUDIS WOULD MAKE THE U.S. A  
LEGAL TARGET

(By the Editorial Board)

It’s not easy to defend an obscure legal doctrine against claims for justice from the victims of the worst terrorist attack ever to take place on U.S. soil. But doing so has become a necessity, since Congress has decided to rewrite U.S. law on sovereign immunity.

Last week the Senate unanimously passed the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act, which authorizes U.S. courts to hear civil claims for monetary damages against a foreign state accused of direct involvement in a terrorist act harming an American citizen in the U.S. Under current law, almost all foreign nations are immune from lawsuits in U.S. courts.

While the bill doesn’t name any particular country, it would enable the 9/11 families to sue Saudi Arabia. Fifteen of the 19 hijackers were Saudi citizens, and some officials and members of the royal family have long been accused of involvement in the plot. Despite its wide support, President Barack Obama has promised to veto the bill.

A veto would be well deserved, and before members of Congress try to override it, they might want to consider the value of sovereign immunity—and the nation that benefits from it the most. (Hint: They represent it.)

If other nations follow the Senate’s lead, no country would be a bigger, better, richer target for lawsuits than the U.S. In Cuba and Iran, in fact, courts have already issued billions of dollars in judgments against Washington. Changing U.S. law might give them and other nations so inclined a chance to actually collect on such rulings.

This potential legal liability would hang over the U.S. fight against global terrorism, and leave the government liable for actions by U.S. troops in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and elsewhere. U.S. aid to Israel, for example, could leave it open to suits from Palestinians injured by Israeli troops. The entirety of U.S. foreign policy could be put on trial under the guise of seeking monetary justice.

Acknowledging the importance of sovereign immunity does not require overlooking the Saudis’ role in the rise of Muslim extremism: They have spent decades and billions of dollars exporting their extremist Wahhabi version of Islam. Many Saudi charities and individuals have directly supported violent groups such as al-Qaeda.

But the response to this activity properly resides in the realm of diplomacy and trade policy, not in court. It is a slow, uneven process, but change is possible—and there are signs that the Saudi ruling family realizes this.

No one can deny the right of the 9/11 families to truth and justice. They have already received billions from the victim compensation fund established by Congress, and two separate government investigations spent years producing the 9/11 Commission report.

A more productive exercise of congressional authority would focus on that report—specifically, the so-called “28 pages” from the initial 9/11 investigation that remain under seal. Many of the victims’ families, as well as other Americans, want to know what is in those pages.

Some lawmakers who have seen them say there is nothing damaging to national security in them and they should be released. Others, including members of the 9/11 Commission staff, say they are filled with hearsay implicating prominent Saudi citizens.

A compromise is not hard to envision: Release the pages, along with an explanation from the commission as to why the allegations don’t hold up. Such an agreement would also serve the cause of truth and justice—without jeopardizing America’s moral and legal standing in the rest of the world.

[From The Hill, Sept. 21, 2016]

EU EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER 9/11 BILL

The European Union on Wednesday expressed concern about the possible adoption by Congress of a bill that would allow U.S. citizens to sue Saudi Arabia over the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

The Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act (JASTA), which has bipartisan support and passed both houses of Congress, would amend the federal criminal code to permit lawsuits against foreign states and officials believed to be involved in terrorist attacks.

The White House is expected to veto it this week, arguing that the bill would lead to reciprocal lawsuits against U.S. citizens, but Congress is expected to attempt to override the veto. In a letter dated Sept. 19 obtained by The Hill, the EU said “the possible adoption and implementation of the JASTA would be in conflict with fundamental principles of international law and in particular the principle of State sovereign immunity.”

“State immunity is a central pillar of the international legal order. Any derogation from the principle of immunity bears the inherent danger of causing reciprocal action by other states and an erosion of the principle

as such. The latter would put a burden on bilateral relations between states as well as on the international order,” the EU said.

The passage of JASTA came after suspicions that Saudi Arabia supported four of the 9/11 hijackers. Saudi Arabia has denied any support of the attack.

[From The Telegraph, June 2016]

WHY A U.S. LAW TO LET 9/11 FAMILIES SUE  
SAUDI ARABIA IS A THREAT TO BRITAIN AND  
ITS INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES

(By Tom Tugendhat MP)

The Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act (Jasta) that is making its way through Congress is not intended as an attack on MI5 or MI6, services that work so closely with the U.S. intelligence community. The law was written with the intention of allowing U.S. victims of terrorism to bring lawsuits in American courts against the government of Saudi Arabia and other nations whose state bodies could be accused of offering a blind eye—and even a helping hand—to sponsors of terror. The Senate has already passed it, leading the Saudi government to threaten to sell the \$750 billion in assets it holds in the U.S.

Under the bill, U.S. citizens might sue the British government claiming a negligent lack of effort to tackle Islamic radicalism in earlier decades. Some in the U.S. already accuse Britain of tolerating radical preachers in “Londonistan” during the Nineties, an approach they say spawned terrorism. Saudi Arabia may be the target of the law, but it could also have serious unintended consequences for Britain.

The act would expose the British government to the possibility of revealing the secrets of intelligence operations in open court, or paying damages over alleged failures to prevent terrorist attacks. Either outcome would put the special relationship under severe strain.

Under the bill, U.S. citizens might sue the British government claiming a negligent lack of effort to tackle Islamic radicalism in earlier decades. Some in the US already accuse Britain of tolerating radical preachers in “Londonistan” during the Nineties, an approach they say spawned terrorism.

Such critics cite cases such as the 2001 failed attack on an aircraft by Richard Reid, the shoe bomber. A petty criminal from Bromley and a Muslim convert, he was radicalised at the Finsbury Park Mosque which was known to the police and MI5 as a base for extremist preachers.

A lawsuit brought under Jasta might force the UK government to reveal intelligence about the plot, why it failed to act and its reasons for doing so. Alternatively, Britain would have to agree a financial settlement. Either way, Britain’s reputation would be severely damaged.

Modern diplomacy is based on an old concept, sovereign immunity, which Britain adopted in 1648. It prevents the courts of any nation being used to harass government officials. The bill before Congress would see the U.S. abandon that principle. Foreign governments, even friendly ones, would be exposed to the U.S. courts and the prospect of judicial extortion to avoid revealing secret intelligence. That can only lead to a cooling of relations and isolate the U.S.

Dismissing cases brought under the new law would be harder, since the act also undermines the power of U.S. authorities to halt trials. Federal courts would no longer be able to rule on sovereign immunity protections during a trial’s “motion to dismiss” stage. That would allow U.S. lawyers to either force foreign states to disclose sensitive information and extort settlements.

There is a way to prevent the most damaging of cases. The U.S. president can invoke

a state secrets privilege to bar certain “discoveries” of sensitive information, even in private litigation. Under the current administration, that may prove adequate protection for an ally such as Britain. But given his disregard for international co-operation it seems reasonable to wonder whether a President Trump would ever invoke that legal privilege, even on behalf of an allied nation. The decision would be completely at his discretion. Such is the power of the presidency.

The Obama White House and the State Department are strongly opposed to Jasta. They can see the potential for diplomatic damage. They also realise the potential for revenge prosecutions in foreign jurisdictions. The international banking system means that most of the world's financial transactions are routed through computer servers in the U.S. If the U.S. allows lawsuits against foreign governments for complicity in terrorism, how long before a foreign court allows, case against the U.S. for negligence over terrorist financing?

The Senate was mistaken to pass this bill and the House of Representatives should reject it. Sadly though, both Mr Trump and Hillary Clinton have said they would sign it. Doing so would weaken the U.S. and damage the special relationship. The world needs U.S. leadership and partnership. Jasta would only leave us all more isolated.

#### TRIBUTE TO HARRY REID

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to a selfless public servant, a committed leader, and a dear friend: Senator HARRY REID.

Growing up in the small town of Searchlight, NV, Senator REID was no stranger to hardship. His father suffered from severe depression and his mother worked long hours as a laundress to help support their struggling family. The Reids lived in a tiny tin shack with no toilet or telephone. They had limited access to schools, healthcare, and the basic comforts of modern life.

From his hardscrabble youth, HARRY developed a fighting spirit that would later define his career in public service. That spirit was cultivated by his high school boxing coach, Mike O'Callaghan, who would later become Nevada's 23rd Governor. More than a coach, O'Callaghan was a mentor. He taught Senator REID his first lessons in civics and raised HARRY's vision of what he could accomplish, encouraging him to pursue higher education and a life in politics.

Senator REID graduated with a bachelor's degree in political science from Utah State University and would later earn a law degree from George Washington University. While still a law student, Senator REID worked nights as a U.S. Capitol Police officer to pay his way through school. Shortly after finishing his law degree, he returned to Nevada where he began climbing the ladder of State politics. Senator REID served as a city attorney, a State assemblyman, a Lieutenant Governor, a gaming commissioner, and a Congressman before being elected to the Senate in 1986.

Here in the Senate, HARRY distinguished himself as a no-nonsense legis-

lator whose unmatched work ethic and fiery commitment to principle stood out among his peers. As a young boxer, HARRY was renowned for being tough and tenacious in the ring; as a rising Senator, he was equally steadfast and determined.

Having spearheaded the passage of several high-profile pieces of legislation, HARRY quickly won the respect of his colleagues and earned a spot on the Democratic leadership team. He served for many years as the Senate Democratic leader. But regardless of the ranks he has achieved, HARRY's first and foremost commitment has always been to the people of Nevada.

Despite his years in Washington, HARRY never actually left Searchlight; he simply carries it with him wherever he goes. He holds close to his heart the painful memory of growing up in a dusty mining town with little hope and limited opportunity. He embraces the harsh experiences of a childhood spent living in poverty and draws upon them to fuel his work in the Senate today. In his decades-long effort to empower society's most vulnerable, he has never forgotten where he came from or whom he fights for. He has never forgotten Searchlight.

Perhaps this is why he eschews the trappings of public office and frequently skips the galas, gaudy dinners, and other extravagant affairs that are part and parcel of the Washington social scene. Perhaps this is why he avoids television interviews and rarely ever spends more than 10 minutes at a political fundraiser—because, at the end of the day, no matter the titles he receives or the awards he is given, he will always be that little boy from Searchlight.

Senator REID is among the most grounded of legislators. I have always had the deepest admiration for his humility, kindness, and compassion. Although he and I have often disagreed on the issues, we have always agreed on the values that make life worth living: namely, God, family, and service to country. Over many decades in the Senate, he has served our Nation exceptionally well. Although he will be missed in this Chamber, he has earned well-deserved golden years in his beloved home State of Nevada. I wish HARRY, his wonderful wife, Landra, and all the Reid family the very best.

#### TRIBUTE TO BARBARA MIKULSKI

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to BARBARA MIKULSKI, who is retiring from the Senate this year, having spent 40 years serving the people of Maryland in Congress.

Senator MIKULSKI has been a trailblazer all her life. She grew up in east Baltimore and attended Mount Saint Agnes College and the University of Maryland School of Social Work. She began her career as a social worker and community organizer before being elected to the Baltimore City Council in 1971. In 1976, Senator MIKULSKI won

election to the U.S. House of Representatives, where she served for 10 years before winning election to the Senate in 1986.

At the time Senator MIKULSKI began her Senate service, she was one of only two female Senators. Today there are 20 female Senators. Next Congress there will be 21. Senator MIKULSKI has served as a role model and mentor for many of these leaders. She is the longest serving woman in the history of the U.S. Congress and retires as an icon for many young women who dream of serving their country in elected office.

Senator MIKULSKI has been a leader for many years on health care, education, and veterans' issues. She is the first woman and first Marylander to chair the Senate Appropriations Committee, one of the most influential committees in Congress. Senator MIKULSKI has been a strong supporter of our Nation's space program throughout her time in Congress and was instrumental in the creation and launch of the Hubble and Webb space telescopes. She even has a supernova named after her—Supernova Mikulski.

Senator MIKULSKI has fought long and hard for the people of Maryland and for the issues she believes in. She is tenacious and dedicated and knows how to get things done. I wish her the very best as she moves on to her next endeavor.

#### TRIBUTE TO DAVID VITTER

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to the senior Senator from Louisiana, my friend DAVID Vitter. Over more than a decade, I have had the privilege to get to know DAVID as a colleague and a friend. When he retires in January, he will be greatly missed.

DAVID is a New Orleans man, born and raised. In his younger years, he achieved impressive academic feats, graduating from Harvard and earning a Rhodes scholarship to study at Oxford. As he is fond of telling, after his time in England, he applied to three law schools—Harvard, Yale, and Tulane—and chose to attend the best of the three: Tulane.

Just a few years later, he won a seat in the Louisiana House of Representatives. There, he earned a reputation as an ethics crusader—a reputation that has stuck with him throughout his career. Many observers credit him in no small part with the transformation of his home state's politics—once famously dominated by colorful but ethically questionable characters—and he should be rightfully pleased at the fruits his efforts bore for the State he loves. In Washington, his work to strengthen ethics laws at the Federal level may not have always made him the most popular among his colleagues, but they reflect the same spirit of reform and willingness to stand up for what he believes in that have been the hallmarks of DAVID's career.

On the legislative front, DAVID has been a champion for his conservative